Putin’s Russia. Do traces of KGB, FSB and GRU lead to Islamic State?

This time I decided to draw attention to a significant role (which was a surprise for many experts) of Chechen terrorists in a battle of Islamic state that has become a main threat to the West. Based on this role, it is not only possible, but vital to examine the potential links between the Islamic state and Russian secret services.

One of the inspiration sources was the article published in ‘The Huffington Post’ called ‘You Can’t Understand ISIS If You Don’t Know the History of Wahhabism in Saudi Arabia’. It was written by Alastair Crooke, a famous expert of the Middle East terrorism, a former diplomat and a ranking figure in British intelligence MI-6.
That article is definitely worth reading for all of those who want to understand more about the phenomenon and threats of the Islamic state. And I don’t even consider arguing with the famous expert, especially when I, myself, do not aspire a career of terrorism expert.

However, after long years of exploring Putin's current regime and it's KGB roots, I believe that Crooke's headline can be rephrased like this: 'Is it really possible to fully understand the phenomenon of the Islamic state without paying attention to the alleged links between Russian secret services and Chechen terrorists?'

Some things are hard to deny

In general, the links between Chechen terrorist and Russian secret services cannot be denied even by those Western experts and commentators who tend to call these links a conspiracy theory.

The fact that the famous Shamil Basayev, Ruslan Gelayev and some others Chechen terrorist commanders began their career not only fighting on the Russian side during the Georgian-Abkhaz war, but were directly trained by the special forces of Russian military intelligence (GRU), was basically never even denied in Russia. The traces of GRU agents were not a secret as well.

Even Yuri Drozdov, the legend of Russian secret services, former KGB General-Major and a longtime chairman of the board at 'S', in his interview for fontanka.ru in 2011 publicly admitted that all this information about Basayev was true. According to Drozdov, Basayev was 'one of the leaders of a special military division'.

Also undenied is the fact that Basayev's incursion into Dagestan and house bombing afterwards contributed, to say the least, to Putin's coming to power. The Western world has less and less doubt that this was all a well-executed, although seemingly unthinkable, operation of Russian secret services.

Whether we read Litvinenko's and Felshtisnky's book 'FSB blowing up Russia', David Satter's 'Darkness at Dawn: The Rise of the Russian Criminal State', John Dunlop's 'The Moscow Bombings of September 1999: Examinations of Russian Terrorist Attacks at the Onset of Vladimir Putin's Rule', or the especially popular investigation carried out by Karen Dawisha, professor at the Miami University, called

‘Putin’s Kleptocracy: Who Owns Russia?’, it is difficult to deny the tons of odd coincidences and inexplicable actions of Russian government. In the meantime, Putin’s regime closed all doors to any kind of investigations, and many people, who were trying to shed some light on these allegations, were murdered or died under very strange circumstances.

What are the roots of Chechen’s Wahhabism?

However, this time the examination should not start from the aforementioned allegations. It is worth following Crooke’s example and examine the history of Wahhabism – not only in Saudi Arabia but in Chechnya and the former USSR in general. Because namely the so-called Chechen Wahhabis are now battling for Islamic terrorists – they were always the synonym for the term ‘terrorists’ in Russia.

Russian journalist Sanobar Shermatova, who died in 2011, was considered not only a journalist, but also one of the best Russian experts of Middle Asia and Caucasus. After the events in Chechnya and Dagestan in summer 1999 she wrote a serious analytic piece called ‘The so-called Wahhabis’.

In this essay Shermatova digs into Wahhabism roots not only in Chechnya and Dagestan, but also in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kirghizia. She doesn’t tend to any conspiracy theories, and examines various links of ‘the so-called Wahhabis’ – also with Afghanistan, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

But the story begins with the protests in Dunshanbe in autumn 1991 that resulted in Tajikistan government allowing the first free elections and registering the Islamic party (not without the help of Moscow’s go-betweens, including Vladimir Putin and Anatolij Sobczak, who is more likely Putin’s comrade rather than a democrat which he is often referred to – aut. note).

Many authors in Tajikistan itself claim that namely the pressure from Sobczak-led delegation led to Tajikistan’s government decision to register the Islamic party, although it has already been labeled extremists and ‘Wahhabis’ by then.

After emphasising that this Islamic party was merely a ‘branch of USSR Islamic Revival party’, Shermatova continued: ‘Islamic activists played a pretty important role in the opposition. I mean those who were called ‘Wahhabis’ in KGB chronicles. At the time this term was not widely known, and not entirely understood even by those who were called this name. USSR had banned the Islamic literature, and only those few who went to study in Arab countries, had knowledge about Islam history, movements and streams. But these people, as usual, were inspected for their loyalty to KGB, and then included into ‘religious nomenclature’ while constantly being controlled by the special services. Ordinary Muslims were not familiar with Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhabi’s doctrine. In Shermatova’s research and in further investigation of Uzbekistan’s and Kirghizia’s ‘Wahhabis’, KGB traces stretch along the story.

Which theory is more reliable?

Truth is, many other Russian researchers deny any role of the KGB in spreading Wahhabism ideas in the former USSR territory. For example, a famous Russian historian of religion and Islamic researcher Roman Silantyev states that KGB allegedly had no more power to resist this spread. Aleksei Kundryavtsev, associate at the Moscow Institute of Oriental Studies, even claims that the young generation of Islamists turned the Wahhabism direction precisely because the old religious authorities had KGB shadows on them. Other authors elaborate these ideas to a level where it turns out that KGB started to use the name ‘Wahhabis’ on those Muslim activists who were not willing to collaborate with KGB in the first place.

But none of these experts deny that establishing a USSR Islam Revival party was a main element of ‘Wahhabism’ rudiment in the former USSR territory.

In the meantime, Akhmed Zakayev (who then lived in London and was even called the Prime minister of the unrecognised Chechen Republic of Ichkeria), Aslan Maskhadov (former Chechnya’s president) and other so-

called representatives of the wing of the secular battle for Chechnya's independence has long and consistently called many radicals the agents of Russian special services. Zakayev's attitude towards the aforementioned congress of USSR Islam Revival party in Astrakhan is also unambiguous.

'When the the founding congress of USSR Islamic Revival party was held in Astrakhan in 1989 (other sources say 1990, so Zakayev might be mistaken – aut. note), KGB undoubtedly knew what they wanted. Just as Vladimir Zhirinovsky's liberal democrat party, which has been preventing the true Russian liberal democrats from uniting for two decades now, the branches of USSR Islam Revival party, that have taken roots into in Muslim regions of the former USSR, have successfully separated Muslims by dividing them into 'right' and 'wrong'. This is how Moscow turned Islamic radicalism into an effective vaccine against various nations' movements for national liberation', Zakayev explained in his interview back in 2008.
A lot can be said about KGB's role in these events from the emerged stories that KGB agents were being infiltrated into democratic movements, and tried to control them (see 'Putin's Russia. System's spine – KGB: who was hiding behind Gorbachev's and Putin's backs'). It would have been weird if KGB had treated Islamic movement different than the democratic.

Returning to Shermatova's idea that the rise of Wahhabism can be viewed both through the prism of Islamic Revival party congress and the events in Tajikistan, it is worth noting that there are at least three different witnesses who claim that KGB had consciously provoked the bloody events in Dushanbe in 1990. Their goal was to prevent the liberation movement in Tajikistan which was based on the examples of Ukraine and the Baltic States.

One of these testimonies was published by the then-officer of Tajikistan KGB – Abdul Nazarov. Another was announced by Kakhar Makhmarov, longtime leader of Tajikistan during Soviet days and the first president of

Tajikistan. The third testimony was published by Makhmadali Khait, a former activist of folk movement ‘Rastochez’, now the deputy chairman at Tajikistan Islamic Revival party.

In this context it would be hard to believe that KGB did no longer control the situation regarding the spread of Wahhabism in the former USSR territory, let alone made effort that the congress of Islamic Revival party in Astrakhan went according to their scenario. This leads to thinking that the statements of both Shermatova and Zakayev sound much more logical than those claiming that KGB had no role in creating the aforementioned party and during the rise of Wahhabism.

Chechen terrorists forged in Tajikistan

It is also worth speaking about Tajikistan in the context of Wahhabism history in Chechnya because Basayev, ‘one of the leaders of the special purpose military unit’, went to Tajikistan where the political war had already gained momentum by then, and fought in the opposition side.

It is stated that Basayev was personally familiar with Said Abdul Nuri, the leader of United Tajik opposition and Islamic party. Ostensibly this acquaintance led to Khattab moving to Chechnya and becoming Basayev’s loyal comrade.

Moreover, some experts in Armenia claim that Basayev, just like Chechen terrorists Gelayev and Salman Raduyev, who were always linked to Russian special services, fought for Afghanistan side in another war (before Abkhazia) where the examination of the role of Soviet secret services will probably never be complete – in Nagorno-Karabakh. Namely in Nagorno-Karabakh Basayev allegedly met Khattab who was fighting in the same battlefield.

Telling links to Dugin

However, it is worth returning to the congress of USSR Islamic Revival party in Astrakhan and its main players. Though Akhman-Kadi Akhtayev, a modest Islamic teacher from Dagestan, was elected a leader of the party, the

names of other organizers speak for themselves. First of all – Geydar Dzhemal, the current chairman at the Russian Islam committee, a longtime companion of Alexander Dugin who earned fame during the aggression in Ukraine.
Although Dzhemal is sometimes even referred to as a dissident of Soviet times, and now turned into Putin's opponent, this figure is worth taking a closer look. Not only because of his longtime friendship with Dugin. Dzhemal is a grandson of a chairman of Azerbaijani USSR supreme court, formerly a high-ranking officer at the Caucasian NKVD. He started his career in 1965 when he entered the Institute of Oriental languages (later renamed the Institute of Asian and African studies). By the way, the famous Zhirinovsky entered the same institute in 1964).
There are many testimonies on what kind of institution it was and how it was related to USSR secret services. But probably the most eloquent is the one published by a famous Russian journalist Yelena Tregubova in her book 'The tales of a Kremlin digger'.

The journalist quotes Mikhail Margelov, a former chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Federation Council of Russia, currently a vice-president of 'Transneft'. It should be noted that in 1997, when Tregubova published her words, Margelov was only a 'young PR specialist'

But it is worth noting what he said to journalist's voice recorder: 'after my studies at the Institute of Asian and African studies I had two ways – back to KGB or 'following a party line'. Everything else is only branches of these lines: you can go to APN (press agency 'Novosti'), to the Ministry of Foreign affairs, and to the ideological department of the Central Committee… Or you end up in the First Chief Directorate (KGB foreign intelligence – aut. note) in Yesenevo'.

However, the official Dzhemal's biography says that he was expelled from the institute after his first year of studies – allegedly because of the 'bourgeois nationalism'. Yet it is inexplicable how he managed to land a job at the publishing house when this type of institutions were

carefully protected from any kind of ‘anti-Soviet elements’ during USSR times. Also inexplicable is how Dzhemal and Dugin avoided any serious problems with KGB after practicing ‘underground’ activities, spreading fascist ideas and event creating the ‘Black Order of SS’.

It is also difficult to explain why KGB did not take an interest into the fact that Dzhemal allegedly affiliated with Tajikistan Islamists back in 1979. And in 1980 he traveled to Tajikistan together with Dugin – it could hardly be overlooked by the KGB.

Truth is, Dugin’s case is much clearer. It is known that his father Gelyi Dugin was a general-lieutenant at GRU. In 1990-1992 Dugin himself was granted unprecedented access to the secret KGB archives, despite his alleged underground activities, and he later admitted that his first geopolitical textbook was written under a ‘closed regime in General Staff Academy’. Looks like the invisible hand of GRU protected Dugin during other career steps as well, thus it can be assumed that he had always been a GRU man.

It can explain things that seem inexplicable in Dzhemal’s biography – it doesn’t matter whether he personally collaborated with GRU or KGB – for those who know USSR reality, the trace of secret services seems highly likely in this case.

By the way, after the spread of Wahhabism in USSR territory Dzhemal had publicly supported the actions of Chechen Wahhabis or even justified terror acts numerous times. However, even under Putin’s regime, he managed to avoid the attention of Russian law enforcement for many years by some miracle.

In summer 2009 Maksim Mishchenko (deputy of the State Duma, founder and leader of the youth movement ‘Young Russia’) made an official address to the Russian prosecutor general’s office regarding Dzhemal’s extremist public announcements. He demanded that the Islamic committee

was declared an extremist organization, and Dzhemal was prosecuted. But again – no result.

Dzhemal was inviolable until March 2012 when he could no longer avoid the persecution against Putin's critics after the end of 2011 and the mass protests in the beginning of 2012. FSB performed a search at his house and allegedly found extremist literature. Nevertheless, although the proceedings were instituted, Dzhemal enjoys freedom and active social lifestyle, unlike other leaders of the 'Left front'.

A net of KGB agents

Dzhemal's involvement in creating USSR Islamic Revival party, of course, is not a sufficient evidence of a link between Chechen Wahhabism and Russian secret services. Especially when he can only indirectly be called a supporter of Wahhabism – at least in public he prefers to be referred to as a representative of Russian Islam in general.

So let's take look at other famous figures from the congress in Astrakhan. Among them, apart from Basayev and Nuri, is Bagautdin Kebedov, a leader of Dagestan's Wahhabis and active organizer of Basayev's intrusion into Caucasus republic.

But the most attention should be drawn to the two Chechens who are considered not just representatives of the radical wing, but ideologists of Wahhabism. One of them – Adam Deniyev – was openly called 'Wahhabi' back in 1989 by the officers at the Religious board under the Chechnya-Ingush council of ministers. He denied his belonging to this Islam radical movement at the time, but nowadays even the researchers of 'Wahhabism' in USSR consider this man one of the first ideologists of Wahhabism in Chechnya.

Apart from the aforementioned titles, Deniyev was also a longtime KGB and FSB agent. At least he was called that

by various sources not only in Chechnya but in Russian media.

For example, ‘Nezavisamaya Gazeta’ wrote after Deniyev’s death in 2001: ‘Upon his visit in Baghdad, president Dzhokhar Dudayev informed Iraq’s government about the links between Deniyev (who went to Iraq to study in 1992 after unsuccessful attempts to take roots in Chechnya – aut. note) and Russian FSB. It was probably the first accusation for Deniyev regarding his connections with special services. Later on these accusations were following him constantly’.
In 2000, after the Russian forces uptake in Chechnya, when Deniyev was appointed the deputy of Akhmad Kadyrov, Chief Mufti of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, gazeta.ru announced that, according to their sources, Deniyev was not only an FSB agent, but would also be executing a special FSB operation in the republic’s government.

Andrei Babitsky, a famous Russian journalist, also called Deniyev an FSB agent and even accused him of kidnapping. Deniyev publicly responded that he had never been related to any special services, but “if he was a KGB agent, he would definitely be proud of that’. Deniyev has never hidden his pro-Russian position, at least after the second Chechen war. It is also known that his brother was a high-ranking officer at Chechen FSB.

There is also enough evidence in Russian media about Supyan Abdullayev (another ideologist of Wahhabism and one of the main initiators of creating a USSR Islamic Revival party) and his links with special services. But in this context it is important to emphasize not the testimonies themselves, but the fact that Abdullayev, according to these evidence, started to collaborate with KGB well before founding the USSR Islam Revival party.

For example, in 1999 (already in the current regime) ‘Moskovskij Komsomolets’ wrote: ‘Abdullayev demonstrated radical views well before the collapse of

USSR and organizing the ‘Islam Revival Party’. According to some sources, Abdullayev was recruited by KGB officers back in 1980s’.

Zakayev’s insights worth noting?
So the creation of the party itself should raise serious suspicions about the key role of KGB in these processes – whether we believe Zakayev’s testimony, or not. The rudiment of Wahhabism in Chechnya is apparently also related to the suspected KGB agents.

But now we have to talk not only about historic consequences. Because Abdulayev, until his death in 2011, was the main comrade and ideologist of Dokka Umarov, leader of Caucasian emirate. And namely the role of Umarov and his other companions (also the creators of USSR Islam Revival party) is especially important talking about the current fight of Chechen Wahhabis in the Islamic state.

But first let’s go back to June 4, 2013, when the world spoke very little about the Chechens fighting in Syria. That exact day Zakayev gave a very interesting interview to radio station ‘Radio Svoboda’.
When asked about the rumours that Umarov had passed away, Zakayev put a whole theory that is definitely worth quoting: ‘according to our sources, the information about Umarov’s death is false; he is alive and healthy. The thing is that Russia, its special services and Vladimir Putin are once again preparing a surprise for theirWestern partners who are involved in intense negotiation on Syria’s situation.

Syria witnessed confronting forces who not only fought for Assad (Syria’s president Bashar al-Assad; in 2011 a revolutions against him started in Syria – aut. note) or against Assad: they represent different influence areas – the Western world that wants to leave Russia without its last foothold in the Middle East, and Russia which understands that losing the influence in Syria means losing influence in the whole Middle East region. Therefore

Russia is interested in delaying or overall preventing the process of Assad's withdrawal. To do so, according to our information, Kremlin made a decision to transfer Umarov to Syria.

And what does Umarov's show-up in Syria (at the opposition fighting against Assad) really mean? After all, Russia claims that for Assad opposition is not some sort of political forces or state's population, but merely dregs from all around the world, the so-called Islam radicals who promote the global ideology of Jihad. Can you imagine what position the Western leaders, who made the decision to lift embargo of arms for the opposition, will be put in? Dokka Umarov's show-up in Syria will become an evidence that the opposition has criminal organizations among its ranks. Moreover, those organizations have been declared terrorist by the UN and various other states.'

A journalist, in his own view, found this version 'interesting but very extravagant', so he asked straightforwardly whether such response of Zakayev meant that Umarov was related to Russian special services.

To which Zakayev responded calmly: "We announced it many times. In 2007 Umarov declared war to America, Great Britain and Israel. Before this statement, Dokka was in the radar of Russian secret services, but was released by some miracle, and announced this statement. Umarov is under full command of Russian special services. To this day he was (and will be, I'm sure) performing the tasks assigned to him by these structures. The emerging of his organization in Northern Caucasus complied with Kremlin's interests because it kind of proved this: Chechnya is not fighting for independence and statehood, but rather for creating a caliphate "from sea to sea". Russian propaganda was trying to show to the world that the ones fighting in Chechnya are not freedom fighters but radicals who will put all effort to recreate caliphate, and are the enemies of civilized world'.

In this interview Zakayev also stated that “according to our sources, Umarov’s main ideologist and the main author of emirate concept – Isa Umarov- is already is Syria. A few days ago he announced that the epicenter of events is namely there, and that all supporters of jihad have to be in Syria.’

Looking back to those weird (at the time) statements from today’s perspective, we can notice that everything basically came true. Umarov, of course, did not show up in Syria, but was murdered after less than a year – in winter or spring in 2014. Meanwhile, Omar al-Shishani (real name Tarkhan Batirashvili), who suddenly rose to power at Islamic state, admits openly that he came to Syria under Umarov’s command.

The rise of Wahhabis provides a lot of pabulum to Russian propaganda and political games. Based on various sources in Syria itself it can be assumed that Umarov certainly is in Syria. And it looks like he is involved in recruiting new terrorists to Islamic state. It was stated by Usman Ferzauli, a self-proclaimed Ichkeria’s minister of foreign affairs, in his interview for Russian newspaper ‘Komersant’ on July 26, 2013.

Wahhabism, Georgian intelligence or GRU?

But let’s take a sharper look at Chechens themselves (their biographies, to be specific) in Islamic state’s government which has been considered the biggest threat to the West lately. Especially in the context of other vague links between Russian regime and Islam terrorists- both in terms of what was written in this essay, and the historic parallels in my previous essay ‘Putin’s Russia. Will Kremlin get away with this again?’

These two Chechens (originally from Pankisia, Georgia) are the aforementioned al-Shishani and Muslim Abu Walid al Shishani (real name Murad Margoshvili). The two were included into the list of the most wanted terrorists in US.

A famous British journalist and blogger Joana Paraszczuk, who is currently focusing on Chechen battle in Syria, wrote in one of her pieces about the ‘ridiculous conspiracy theory that al-Shishani is actually a KGB agent’.

Since al-Shishani is only 28 year old, this theory might seem ridiculous at first glance. When USSR collapsed and KGB was reorganized into other Russian secret services, the kid was just 5 years old. But it is important to note that these rumours are also circulating among the Chechens who are fighting in Syria. Moreover, the journalist herself thinks that it is vital to publish such rumours, and adds that they are also related to the opinion that Umarov has a strong influence on al-Shishani.

At first glance it seems that other al-Shishani’s biography facts would deny even the slightest possibility that al-Shishani is an agent of Russian secret services. It is widely known that Batirashvili (al-Shishani’s real name) was serving in Georgian army and fighting against Russian aggression in 2008. Some say he was an agent of Georgian special services or at least the special divisions of Georgian army.

But Batirashvili’s biography is worth taking a closer look. Especially interesting details were provided by his father Teimuraz Batirashvili who is an orthodox, not Islamist. He told that until the arrest for illegal possession of weapons his son was not a Wahhabi or Islamist in general. According to father, al-Shishani ended up in Syria not because of religion. He simply wanted to make money.

But the most interesting detail is that Batirashvili apparently started his career not in Georgian army but in Gelayev’s terrorist squad when he was barely 14.

The information calls for serious investigation because Gelayev, who had GRU traces stretched behind him for many years, was hiding in Pankisia at the time, and in 2001 he actually participated in the attack in Abkhazia (which was mentioned by Batirashvili’s dad). But this time Galayev

was not on Russian side but allegedly aiming to help Georgia win back Abkhazia.

Gelayev's attack is best illustrated by Irakli Alasania, former Georgian defence minister, in his interview for Georgian press in 2009. In this interview Alasania openly stated that Gelayev and his squad was a 'weapon against Georgians in GRU hands' during the attack in Abkhazia.

Knowing such an eloquent detail of Shishani's career sunrise, all the aforementioned information about suspicious links between Wahhabis and Russian secret services, Zakayev's statements in 2013 about the upcoming Chechen role in Syria, and the testimonies of Batirashvili's father, the theory that this character has suspicious associations (not with KGB but with, say, GRU or FSB) sounds dramatically different. And this possibility should be examined more thoroughly

Terrorist who walked free

Muslim Abu Walid's biography should raise even more thoughts. When this man was known as Margoshvili, he was arrested for terrorism in Russia, and released after two years.

Simply reading what Russian media wrote in 2003, when Margoshvili was arrested, it seemed obvious that this guy, responsible for deaths of many people, was never to see daylight again. But by some miracle he was first sentenced to two years in prison, and then suddenly acquitted during retrial.

If it wasn't enough, a strange story happened in courtroom – FSB officers were allegedly trying to arrest him after the acquittal, however unsuccessfully. According to experts, this can only mean one thing – Margoshvili became (or have already been) an agent of Russian special services.

Not too many consistent coincidences?

By the way, Walid became a headache not only to those worrying about the war in Syria, but to, say, Germany. In the beginning of December, a newspaper ‘Frankfurter Allgemeine’ announced that the diaspora of Chechen natives is radializing, and the biggest contributors are Walid and Shishani who has allegedly become ‘an idol of German Islamists’.

Such information would be yet another reason to examine the real story of Margoshvili – especially knowing KGB traditions to direct their agents towards weakening Western states, the unexpected story of al-Zawahiri’s (Al Qaeda’s leader) potential links to Russian special services, and the fact that many experts finally admit that the Islamic state is a bigger threat to the West than Al Qaeda.

All of this information is in no way an attempt to prove that all Islamic terrorism is directed only by Russian secret services. This is not the case. I perfectly understand that this issue is much more complex.

It would be ignorant to deny various historic facts about the links between Islam terrorists and Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Middle East, and the never ending conflicts in these regions. There even is a basis to talk about the current links between some of the Muslim states and terrorism.

There are various attitudes to such theories as the one presented by Drozdov in his interview for ‘fontanka.ru’. Although he admits that Basayev was one of the leaders of a special purpose military unit, he argues that it is merely Russia’s mistake – the same one USA made regarding bin Laden. KGB general-major had in mind the undenied theory that US supported bin Laden when they provided support to mujahideen during Afghanistan war against USSR.

But there is a basic difference between Muslim or Western states and Russia when it comes to links with terrorism. First of all, if a Western or Muslim state is accused of such

links, the story receives media coverage, the facts are examined and researched. However, it seems that Russia is immune to international research or public discussions although the allegations are long-term and consistent. There is no other state (having in mind the undoubtful USSR traditions that Russia might have adopted) that can be suspected for including terrorism in its arsenal and strategies for fighting in international arena.

So I would like to finish this piece not only by encouraging you to reevaluate all these allegation and threats to the Western states. I'd like to remind once again the Preobrazhensky's warning in 2007:

'The basic difference between Russia's and America's attitude towards Islamic terrorist is that America regards it as an external threat, while Russia employs terrorism as an object and government tool both internally and abroad. Islamic terrorism is only a part of international terrorism. KGB was using terrorism to spread communist regime principles all over the world, and it was well before Islamic terrorism became a global threat.'

After this quote and all the information presented in this essay, the rhetoric question arises: 'Doesn't Putin's current regime use terrorism cynically to reach the same victories – both internally and against the West?'

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